



**Testimony of
Hospice Southeastern Connecticut
Before the Legislature's Public Health Committee
10:00 AM, Friday March 16, 2012
Room 1D, Legislative Office Building Hartford, Connecticut**

My name is Peggy Mayo, LCSW. I am the Supervisor of Counseling Services for Hospice Southeastern CT.

As a career social worker in the field of hospice and employee of Hospice of Southeastern Connecticut as the Supervisor of Counseling Services, I urge you to pass **HB 5499** since patients and families living in Eastern Connecticut deserve the option for FULL end of life continuum of care which *must* include the option for care in a Hospice Residence. A Hospice Residence provides a home like environment which delivers all levels of symptom control and is a place where family may stay overnight with their loved one at the end of life. Currently, any patient who needs or chooses a hospice residence must drive long distances to Branford or Middletown or to another state (Rhode Island) in order to receive loving and compassionate care at the end of life in a Hospice Residence.

Hospice of Southeastern Connecticut is a community based not for profit hospice that has been serving patients in New London County since 1985, caring for more than 9,000 patients over that time. We currently care for patients wherever they call home; in their own home, a Skilled Nursing Facility, a group home or in the hospital. When a person with a terminal illness lives in Eastern Connecticut and can no longer be cared for at home and hospital care is not necessary, there is NO OPTION for the family except to put the person into a Nursing Facility for care. There is NO OPTION for the hospitals or for our patients and families to allow patients to enter a Hospice Residence and die with their loved ones around them. For patients and families with NO OPTION but death, a Hospice Residence in Norwich gives them a much needed option.

I respectfully request, therefore, that you favorably approve **HB 5499: AN ACT CONCERNING REGULATIONS RELATING TO HOSPICE CARE** as the beginning steps to establish a Hospice Residence in Eastern Connecticut.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions pmayo@hospicsect.org.